

QUIET TIME

Why should we have a daily Quiet Time? We are to follow Christ's example. Read Mark 1:21-34. What was Christ's day like? Whose day do you think was busier, yours or His? What was His response to His hectic schedule? Read verse 35. If Christ needed to come before God how much more must we?

To see the need and to want to spend time are one thing, but to observe it with regularity and to use the time you set aside wisely is another thing. Here are some practical suggestions about how the time may be spent wisely.

Fellowship with God

Things to think about!

- That God desires our fellowship is, perhaps, one of the most amazing facts conveyed to us through the Scriptures. Let this simple thought obsess us morning by morning. It will carry us through times of deadness and darkness, give us patience to continue and persevere, when we remember that he is waiting to be gracious to us, waiting till he sees that we wait upon Him.
- It is deeply important that the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ be given its proper place. There can be no fellowship with God on any other basis. Morning by morning there should be a definite, conscious, prayerful praiseful realisation of the blessed sacrifice of God's Son.

Warning: Let us beware lest, if we do not immediately derive any subjective satisfaction or conscious appreciation from this exercise, we conclude that it is of no avail. God is seeking for men and women who will worship. Let us then worship, whether we derive any conscious benefit from it or not. Christ is worthy to be praised. As we set ourselves to worship and praise him for his wondrous sacrifice, seeking to give rather than get, we shall find that the Holy Spirit will silently, but very readily, convey to us the efficacy of his death and make our fellowship with God through the Word and prayer a blessing and delight. In all our reading of His Word and in all our praying our greatest need is a warm, living and expectant faith. Mk. 9:23, 1 Peter 5:10.

Use of the Bible in the Quiet Time

1. Make Time - there must be a Quiet Time. No one can say for someone else when the best time is because all our circumstances differ. If our faith is to live we must give time. That time should be fixed so it becomes a part of our daily schedule. Decide on a time now!! (There is no assertion in the Bible that the morning watch is God's will for all, but there is not a little in typical incidents as well as in the utterances of the saints of God to suggest that the morning may be the normal time. When else in your day are you assured that nothing else can be planned?)
2. Find a quiet place. To derive the fullest benefit from your time you must close the doors of your mind to everything else.
3. Let your heart be still. Come to God with a spirit of stillness - this may have to be developed while coming to God consistently for a time.
4. Come with a spirit of expectancy. He who expects nothing will get nothing. Try to make your time unhurried, in fact try to forget about time. It is worse than useless to spend this time thinking about what you have to do next. Be quiet. Concentrate. Expect.
5. You must have an objective. If you aim at nothing, you are sure to hit it. The object of the quiet time should not be to prepare for a study but to nourish and

build up your own soul. (This is during the bible study portion of your time not your prayer time). It should be a time of self-examination and self-renewal.

How to study your Bible

1. Plan your field of meditation. Decide what you are going to study but don't get bogged down, give yourself some variety.
2. Make your reading and study practical. Your objective in the Quiet Time is not so much to gather information as to gain inspiration, and so you should discover what is the application of what you read to your present circumstances and need.

Prayer in the Quiet Time

The cost of the daily prayer life is great. So great that unless we have a firm assurance that God has called us to spend this time with him each day, we shall never continue in the face of the prolonged initial difficulties, the subsequent occasional hindrances and the sustained opposition of the enemy. If we are in earnest, we shall listen for God's call. Mr. Chadwick writes "Though a man shall have all knowledge about prayer, and though he understands all mysteries about prayer, unless he prays he will never learn to pray."

Prayer is drawing near to God. It is opening our hearts to God. It is talking with him. Hebrews 10:19-22 freely and beautifully sets forth the basis and methods of drawing near to God. This method is in two parts: God's provision and our responsibility. God's provision is that through His Son we have access into the presence of God through the most precious blood of Christ. Our responsibility is to draw near to Him in sincerity - with a true heart. Deliberately, willingly, with a holy boldness and assurance of faith we approach the throne of grace. Reminding ourselves of Christ's sacrifice and priesthood for us, being assured of our position in him, and recalling his invitation to come into God's presence, in sincerity we draw near.

In drawing near to God in sincerity and faith we must make a complete confession of sin.

Then, surely, there must be the realisation of the intense holiness and purity, the magnificent perfection, power and beauty of our God. We do well to be quiet in His presence and worship Him.

Then, should we not praise Him, when we remember with gratitude and thanksgiving the great things that God has done for us.

After confession, worship and adoration, praise and thanksgiving, will come a time of Intercession - a time when we bear up before the Lord those persons and activities which he has laid upon our hearts.

And last of all, we think of ourselves. We will present ourselves before the Lord that he may lay His hand upon us in blessing, that we may more and more be conformed to the image of his Son.

Then as we pray, we pray in the name of the Lord Jesus, not using the phrase mechanically but being conscious of him and all that his name means.

Practical Suggestions

1. Go to bed on time. Get wide awake before starting your reading or prayer.
2. Bring your thoughts back again and again during your time that you are not alone. He is there. Be still and expect God to reveal things to you. Come willing to obey and put into practice all he shows you, instantaneously and unquestioningly.
3. Spend as much time as you can, at least 20 minutes, as you spend time with the Lord your desire to spend more time will grow. Some people find that reading and then praying works best for them as they learn things in their reading that then leads them to prayer.

4. A notebook is helpful; to write down the things God would teach you or have you act upon. Don't get so elaborate that it distracts from what you are doing.

These questions might be helpful in your reading.

- Is there any example for me to follow?
- Is there any command for me to obey?
- Is there any error for me to avoid?
- Is there any sin for me to forsake?
- Is there any promise for me to claim?
- Is there any new thought about God Himself?

If you have no sense of his presence and feel that your prayer is empty and worthless, tell Him about it quite frankly. At the same time tell Him that you believe He is there because of His promises (Jn 14:16; Heb. 13:5; Mt. 28:20), and that you know he will answer prayer quite independently of your feelings.

